

1 28. (new) A flash method operable each time a flash picture is taken with a digital
2 camera, said method comprising performing the following steps with the camera each time the
3 camera takes a flash picture:

4 a) activating a flash with a flash energy lower than the energy normally
5 required for an acceptable final flash energy level for achieving a correct
6 exposure;

7 b) grabbing an image of a subject located a distance from said camera to create
8 image intensity data;

9 c) analyzing said image intensity data to determine a flash degree of exposure,
10 wherein the analyzing does not require knowledge of said distance;

11 d) calculating a subsequent flash energy level to achieve a corrected degree of
12 exposure;

13 e) repeating steps (a) through (d) until the acceptable final flash energy level
14 for achieving a correct exposure is determined; and

15 f) activating a flash at the determined acceptable final flash energy;
16 wherein each of steps (a) through (f) is performed automatically each time the camera takes a
17 flash picture.

1 29. (new) A flash method operable each time a flash picture is taken with a digital camera, said
2 method comprising performing the following steps with the camera each time the camera takes a
3 flash picture:

4 a) activating a flash with a first flash energy lower than the energy normally
5 required for an acceptable final flash energy level;

6 b) grabbing a first image of a subject located a distance from said camera to
7 create first image intensity data;

8 c) analyzing said first image intensity data to determine a first degree of
9 exposure, wherein the analyzing does not require knowledge of said
10 distance;
11 d) scaling said first flash energy to determine a final flash energy level; and
12 e) activating said flash at said final flash energy level for taking a picture;
13 wherein each of steps (a) through (e) is performed automatically each time the camera takes a
14 flash picture.

1 30. (new) A flash apparatus operable each time a flash picture is taken with a digital
2 camera, said apparatus comprising:

3 a) means for activating a flash with a flash energy lower than the energy
4 normally required for an acceptable final flash energy level for achieving a
5 correct exposure;
6 b) means for grabbing an image of a subject located a distance from said
7 camera to create image intensity data;
8 c) means for analyzing said image intensity data to determine a flash degree of
9 exposure, wherein the analyzing does not require knowledge of said
10 distance;
11 d) means for calculating a subsequent flash energy level to achieve a corrected
12 degree of exposure;
13 e) means for repeating steps (a) through (d) until an acceptable final flash
14 energy level for achieving a correct exposure is determined; and
15 f) means for activating a flash at the determined acceptable final flash energy;
16 wherein the apparatus is integrated with the camera and operates automatically each time the
17 camera takes a flash picture